(c) the other steps being taken to prevent any further price-rise of foodgrains meant for vulnerable sections of society?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) No such data has been maintained. However, action taken by the State Governments/UTs under the provisions of Essential Commodities Act, 1955 from the year 2006 is given below:

Year	No. of raids	No. of Persons arrested	No. of Persons prosecuted	No. of Persons convicted	Value of goods confiscated (Rs. in Lakhs)
2006	135025	5421	3244	498	977.21
2007	235405	6944	4872	1022	4003.96
2008 (upto 30.11.2008)	233460	6348	5165	775	5336.3

(c) Under the Public Distribution System Government of India procures and provides essential commodities to the State Governments for Distribution to the vulnerable sections of society. In addition through a mix of monetary fiscal and trade policies steps have been taken to contain the price rise for essential commodities.

Increase in prices of pulses

†1315. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of pulses in the country have gone out of reach of the common man;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and the average consumer sales prices of various pulses from August to November in the current year; and

(c) whether Government is contemplating to take measures to reduce the prices and if so, the details thereof and the extent to which these measures would affect the prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) The reasons for the rise in price of pulses are varied, such as, shortfall in domestic supplies relative to demand, growing demand on account of increase in population and income, changes in consumption pattern due to improvement in income and living standards, adverse weather and climate change, hardening of international prices as well as increase in freight rates.

Month-wise average retail prices of pulses at Delhi from August, 2008 to November, 2008 is given in table below:-

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(Rs.perkg.)

Item	August, 2008	September, 2008	October, 2008	November, 2008
Gram dal	36.00	36.00	37.00	37.00
Tur/Arhar dal	43.50	45.50	50.00	50.00
Moong dal	38.00	41.00	44.00	47.00
Masoor dal	49.50	52.00	54.00	61.00
Urad dal	38.00	41.00	44.00	47.00

(c) Government is aware of the increase in prices of pulses and has been taking effective steps to bridge the gap between demand and supply of pulses and control the increase in prices. It has taken a number of steps as briefly stated below:-

1. Reducing import duties to zero.
2. Imposition of stock limit orders in the case of pulses. So far 11 States have implemented the stock limit order.
3. In order to improve the availability of imported pulses, the Government has already introduced a scheme by which Public Sector Undertakings (namely, STC, MMTC and PEC) and NAFED can import pulses and sell the same and losses, if any, up to 15% will be reimbursed by the Government.
4. Another scheme has been recently introduced under which the PSUs can import pulses and sell the same at a subsidy of Rs.10/- per kg to the State Governments for distribution of pulses through the Public Distribution System.
5. In addition, Government has in place the Food Security Mission, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, whose objective is to increase the production of Pulses by 2 million tonnes by the end of 11th Plan. The estimated production of Pulses for 2007-08 is 15.11 million tonnes.

Expansion of facilities at Government hospitals

1316. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether to meet the increasing patient load and improve the medical facilities, Government propose to revamp and expand the existing infrastructure in the Government hospitals in the capital particularly in AIMS;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the strength of doctors and paramedical staff in Government hospitals do not exist as per ratio of population; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to ensure that the patients are provided best possible treatment in Government hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) To meet the increasing workload and to improve the medical